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A/AC.198/1990/1
19 March 1990

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION
Twelfth session
5-20 April 1990

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

1. Opening of the session.

2. Welcoming of new member.

3. Adoption of the agenda.

4. Election of officers.

5. Substantive questions:

   (a) Promotion of the establishment of a new, more just and more effective world information and communication order intended to strengthen peace and international understanding and based on the free circulation and wider and better balanced dissemination of information.

   (b) Continuation of the examination of United Nations public information policies and activities in the light of the evolution of international relations, particularly during the past two decades, and of the imperatives of the establishment of the new international economic order and of a new world information and communication order.

   (c) Evaluation and follow-up of the efforts made and the progress achieved by the United Nations system in the field of information and communications.

6. Other business.

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ANNOTATIONS

1. Welcoming of new member (item 2)

The General Assembly, by its decision 44/418 of 8 December 1989, decided to increase the membership of the Committee on Information from 73 to 74 members and, by its decision 44/313 of 8 December 1989, appointed Nepal as member of the Committee on Information.

2. Adoption of the agenda (item 3)

The mandate of the Committee on Information is set forth in section I, paragraph 2, of General Assembly resolution 34/182 of 18 December 1979 and was reaffirmed by the General Assembly, most recently, in its resolution 44/50, of 8 December 1989. The provisional agenda, in addition to the normal organizational questions, is based on that mandate.

3. Election of officers (item 4)

Pursuant to the agreement reached by the Committee at its organizational session in 1980, 1/ according to which the principle of geographical rotation would be applied to all officers of the Committee and they should be elected for two-year terms, the Committee elected its officers for the period 1989-1990 at its eleventh session, in 1989.

4. Substantive questions (item 5)

For the consideration of item 5 of the provisional agenda, the Committee will have before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Department of Public Information (A/AC.198/1990/2), submitted pursuant to the request made by the General Assembly in its resolution 44/50, sect. II, para. 4.

(b) Report of the Secretary-General on the public information activities of the United Nations against the policies and practices of apartheid (A/AC.198/1990/3), submitted pursuant to the request made by the General Assembly in its resolution 44/50, sect. II, para. 1 (2) (e).

(c) Report of the Secretary-General on the public information activities of the United Nations pertaining to the situation in the Middle East and the question of Palestine (A/AC.198/1990/4), submitted pursuant to the request made by the General Assembly in its resolution 44/50. para. 1 (2) (g).

(d) Proposed Medium-term Plan for the period 1992-1997. Major Programme VIII - Public Information, Programme 38 - Public Information. This document is submitted for review by the Committee, in accordance with the provisions of the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation.

READEX FICHE

(e) (1) Report of the Secretary-General on the assessment of needs for technical assistance to radio stations that are broadcasting or willing to broadcast to South Africa (A/44/698)

(ii) Report of the Secretary-General on a study of existing and potential interest in broadcasting United Nations anti-apartheid radio programmes and the extent to which audiences in selected urban centres in South Africa listen to them (A/45/162).

These two reports are submitted pursuant to the requests addressed by the General Assembly in its resolution 43/50 H, paras. 1 (b) and (c), of 5 December 1988.

Notes

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 21 (A/35/21), para. 8 (a) and (b).

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General Assembly

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A/AC.198/1990/2
12 March 1990

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION
Twelfth session
5-20 April 1990
Item 5 (b) of the provisional agenda*

SUBSTANTIVE QUESTIONS

Activities of the Department of Public Information

Report of the Secretary-General

INTRODUCTION

1. In resolution 44/50 of 8 December 1989, section II, the General Assembly recommended that the Secretary-General should report to the Committee on Information at its twelfth session in 1990 on the activities of the Department of Public Information and on the implementation of the recommendations in that resolution.

2. In response to resolution 43/60 A of 6 December 1988, the Secretary-General submitted to the General Assembly for consideration at its forty-fourth session, under agenda item 79, a report on questions relating to information (A/44/653), which provided information on activities of the Department in 1989. The Under-Secretary-General for Public Information provided additional information in several oral statements to the Special Political Committee when it considered item 79.

3. The present paper mainly brings the information up to date or deals with items not considered in the report submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session, and as much as possible avoids repetition of the contents of that report.

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* A/AC.198/1990/1.

I. CO-OPERATION WITH THE UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION AND WITH THE NEWS AGENCIES POOL OF NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES

4. In resolution 44/50, section II, paragraph 1, recommendation 2 (a), the General Assembly recommended that the Secretary-General should ensure that the Department of Public Information co-operate more regularly with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) especially at the working level.

5. In late 1989 and early 1990, the Department continued to focus on activities pertaining to International Literacy Year (1990), for which UNESCO is assuming the role of lead organization as mandated by the General Assembly in its resolution 42/104 of 7 December 1987. As part of its information programme for the Year, the Department completed preliminary research for the co-production - with the United Nations Fund for Women, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNESCO - of a 30-minute video on women and literacy. Production of the video is scheduled to begin in April 1990.

6. The weekly video programme, UN in Action, broadcast world wide in Arabic, English, French, Spanish and Russian, produced a special magazine item entitled "Literacy Year - 1990". An interview with the Director-General of UNESCO on the "New Plan of Action for UNESCO" was featured in the half-hour World Chronicle video programme and distributed to some 70 television stations world wide.

7. Among various Department publications, Development Forum has continued to report extensively on educational, scientific and cultural issues in general and on UNESCO's activities in particular. A chapter on International Literacy Year was included in the 1989 edition of Notes for Speakers, a publication for officers who prepare speeches and briefings on the United Nations for general audiences.

8. As a complementary activity to UNESCO's programmes, the ninth annual training programme of the Department for broadcasters and journalists ran from 12 September to 20 October 1989, with the participation of 17 young journalists from developing countries around the world. The trainees were assigned various activities in the Department, including coverage of the proceedings of the General Assembly for their home media.

9. In General Assembly resolution 43/60 A, paragraph 1, recommendation 9 (g), the Department of Public Information was requested to extend all assistance to educational institutions of Member States and to continue to organize seminars for educators and education policy makers. In resolution 44/50, section II, paragraph 1, recommendation 3 (h), the Department was requested to co-operate with educational institutions of Member States, educators and education policy makers, informing them about United Nations activities.

10. In pursuance of these mandates, the Department in co-operation with UNESCO held the twenty-third United Nations Fellowship Programme for Educators, from 4 to 12 December 1989 at Dakar. The programme was organized for the first time for

senior education officials from 17 African countries using French as a teaching medium, who are responsible for the development and implementation of education programmes for teachers of secondary-level students. Participants adopted at the close of the programme a Déclaration de Dakar and a set of recommendations to Member States, UNESCO and the United Nations on ways to improve international education pertaining to the objectives and activities of the United Nations system.

11. The Dakar recommendations underscore the importance of education as an essential tool for promoting the universal ideals and objectives of peace, human rights and development in an increasingly interdependent world. It was recommended, inter alia, that, with the assistance of UNESCO, Member States incorporate international education into their national programmes for educators. The United Nations should ensure that the World Conference on Education, to be held from 5 to 9 March 1990 in Bangkok, consider international education as an essential component of Education for All, and that a special programme on international education be developed as an integral part of programmes for International Literacy Year.

12. In resolution 44/50, section II, paragraph 1, recommendation 2 (b), the Department of Public Information was requested to enhance its co-operation with news agencies of and in the developing countries, in particular the News Agencies Pool of Non-Aligned Countries, the Eco-Pool of the News Agencies of Non-Aligned Countries and the Broadcasting Organization of Non-Aligned Countries, as well as with other news agencies and intergovernmental and regional organizations.

13. During the last quarter of 1989, the Department held extensive consultations with the News Agencies Pool of Non-Aligned Countries and worked out plans to strengthen its ties with the Pool. Agreements were reached at the working level to ensure the flow of communications with the Pool. The Department has been co-operating with the Pool for the past eight years, by sending daily news dispatches through TANJUG, at Belgrade, to the more than 90 news agencies members of the Pool.

II. ACTIVITIES IN CONNECTION WITH INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY

14. In recommendation 2 (c), contained in paragraph 1 of resolution 44/50, section II, the Department of Public Information was requested to continue to disseminate, in co-ordination with the information services of other relevant agencies, information about United Nations activities pertaining, inter alia, to international peace and security. In recommendation 2 (f), the Department was further requested to continue to disseminate information about activities of the United Nations directed at a comprehensive, just and lasting solution of international conflicts by exclusively peaceful means.

15. To focus attention on United Nations peace-keeping and peace-making activities in Central America, the Department produced in close collaboration with the Office of the Personal Representative of the Secretary-General for the Central American peace process, a comprehensive press kit, "The United Nations and the Central

American Peace Process", in English, French and Spanish. The kit, which contains eight separate fact sheets, provides background information, details of the major United Nations responsibilities in the area - United Nations Observer Mission to verify the electoral process in Nicaragua (ONUVEN), United Nations Observer Group in Central America (ONUCA) and International Support and Verification Commission (CIAV) - and information from relevant United Nations documents. The kit was distributed in January 1990 through the network of United Nations information centres and services, with emphasis on centres in Latin American countries. A supply of copies was also provided to ONUCA and ONUVEN headquarters.

16. The new version of the pamphlet "United Nations Peace-Keeping" was prepared for distribution at Headquarters and world wide, through the network of United Nations information centres and services. The eight-panel colour pamphlet, available in English and French, provides basic information on the United Nations concept of peace-keeping, a complete listing of United Nations peace-keeping operations and details of operations currently in the field. One panel also deals with the awarding of the 1988 Nobel Peace Prize.

17. An educational video and accompanying teaching guide on United Nations peace-keeping operations were produced in English, French and Spanish, as part of the About the United Nations series. This 15-minute video, narrated by Colonel Dermot Earley of the United Nations peace-keeping forces, is targeted to secondary-level students.

18. The Department is preparing, in collaboration with the Office for Special Political Affairs, an updated version of The Blue Helmets including a summary of the practice of United Nations peace-keeping operations, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 44/49 of 8 December 1989. The summary will take account of the current international political climate and of the awarding in 1988 of the Nobel Peace Prize to United Nations peace-keeping forces. New sections will deal with the five new peace-keeping operations begun since the book was published in 1985. Sections referring to ongoing operations, along with maps and charts, will also be brought up to date.

III. WORLD DISARMAMENT CAMPAIGN

19. The Secretary-General was also requested in resolution 44/50, section II, paragraph 1, recommendation 2 (c), to ensure that the Department of Public Information continue to disseminate information about United Nations activities pertaining to disarmament.

20. In line with this mandate, the Department produced as part of its United Nations Focus series an information paper devoted to international efforts to achieve a complete ban on chemical weapons. The paper offers a background to the continuing negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament at Geneva and to the debates on the subject during the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly. The paper was distributed at Headquarters and world wide, through the United Nations information centres and services. Recipient educational institutions were sent a special questionnaire designed to assess the usefulness of the paper. This

information paper on the role of the United Nations in the elimination of chemical weapons has received wide acknowledgement among educators and students. Using a question-and-answer format, it is intended to respond to questions most frequently asked by the educational community on the subject. Replies to the questionnaire are currently being tabulated.

21. The Department is preparing, in consultation with the Department of Disarmament Affairs, a comprehensive press kit on the occasion of the Fourth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to be held at Geneva from 20 August to 14 September 1990. The kit, prepared as part of the overall information programme for the Conference, will focus on the background of the Treaty, its main provisions, past review conferences and other major elements of the international non-proliferation régime, including the International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards system and a series of treaties that prohibit nuclear weapons in particular regions or environments. The kit is scheduled for release by 1 July 1990 in English and French, for distribution primarily to the media. It will also be made available to the participants in the Fourth Review Conference.

IV. ACTIVITIES RELATING TO DECOLONIZATION AND THE SITUATION IN NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES

22. The Department was further requested in resolution 44/50, section II, paragraph 1, recommendation 2 (c), to continue to disseminate information about United Nations activities pertaining to decolonization and the situation in the Non-Self-Governing Territories.

23. The Department is preparing a wide range of activities to mark this year the thirtieth anniversary of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. These activities, aimed at publicizing the event, include the production of special publications and audio-visual material to be distributed world wide and the mounting of a special photo exhibit at Headquarters.

24. As part of its press coverage of United Nations activities, the Department continued to report in 1989 on the work of the various United Nations bodies concerned with decolonization, including the Fourth Committee, the Trusteeship Council, the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, the Special Committee against Apartheid and the United Nations Council for Namibia. Press releases were also issued on the various seminars and symposia relating to decolonization.

25. Relevant information has also been regularly covered both in periodicals such as the UN Chronicle and in general reference works of the Department such as the Yearbook of the United Nations, Everyone's United Nations and Basic Facts about the United Nations, a new edition of which was issued in February 1990 in English, with French and Spanish editions to follow. A brochure entitled Decolonization was published, detailing the work and role of the United Nations in the process, summarizing the 1960 Declaration on decolonization and describing the work of the

Special Committee on decolonization. Several aspects of the United Nations work in the field of decolonization were highlighted in the 1989 edition of Notes for Speakers.

26. In addition to short items in news and current affairs radio magazines, the Department produced feature programmes, in both official and non-official languages, exclusively devoted to decolonization and the situation in Non-Self-Governing Territories. The International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism (1990-2000) was featured in one edition of the weekly "UN Caribbean Magazine". The work of the Special Committee on decolonization was featured in the weekly programme "Bonjour l'Afrique", and in editions of "Southern Africa Review". The activities of foreign economic interests preventing decolonization was the main topic of one edition of "L'Afrique à l'ONU". "Decolonization by the Year 2000" was the title of one edition of the weekly programme in Arabic, "Afakon Alamiaya".

27. Editions of "UN Calling Asia" and the weekly programme in Urdu featured Trusteeship Council action on the question of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. "As NU em Accao", the weekly programme in Portuguese, produced an edition on Western Sahara, as did "L'Afrique à l'ONU" and "Perspectives internationales". Five editions of "UN Caribbean Magazine" dealt with the questions of the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories in the Caribbean. "Nouveaux contacts", the weekly French-Creole radio programme, featured the first referendum in the history of the United States Virgin Islands. "Afakon Alamiaya" covered the question of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas). The question of New Caledonia was covered by the Urdu programme.

28. The Department also continued to prepare and distribute television news packages on the situation in Non-Self-Governing Territories to subscribers and syndicators world wide. The Department sold telecast rights for two films on decolonization to the City University of New York, entitled From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe and The Great Awakening.

29. During the past year, the Department responded to over 680 public inquiries about decolonization and the situation in Non-Self-Governing Territories.

V. ACTIVITIES IN CONNECTION WITH HUMAN RIGHTS

30. In resolution 44/50, section II, paragraph 1, recommendation 2 (c), the Department of Public Information was further requested to continue to disseminate information about United Nations activities pertaining to human rights.

31. During the last quarter of 1989, the Department undertook two major activities within the framework of the World Campaign on Human Rights: one in observance of Human Rights Day (10 December); the other in connection with the adoption by the General Assembly of the Convention on the Rights of the Child on 20 November, which coincided with the thirtieth anniversary of the Declaration of the Rights of the Child.

32. On 11 December, in observance of Human Rights Day and to coincide with the tenth anniversary of the adoption by the General Assembly of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Department co-sponsored with the Centre for Human Rights and the NGO Committee on Women, a seminar entitled "Women and Human Rights". The seminar was covered by United Nations radio and other media. For this anniversary, the Department produced a comprehensive information kit on discrimination against women which contained features, background papers, press releases and graphics on the global situation of women, as well as information about the Convention and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. This kit, issued in English, French and Spanish, has been distributed world wide to media and interested non-governmental organizations.

33. The Department also organized in the public lobby of the General Assembly building an exhibit of lithographs depicting the various articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which were donated to the United Nations by the King of Spain. A screening of films on human rights was also held. The Department assisted the United Nations Sales Section in launching, also on 11 December, a children's book on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Featured on that occasion were the book's Brazilian author Ruth Rocha and artist Otavio Roth.

34. On 20 November, to mark the adoption by the General Assembly of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Department assisted UNICEF and the Centre for Human Rights in organizing a special children's event at the United Nations which was attended by more than 500 children and teenagers and attracted extensive media attention. Special guests and participants included the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the President of the General Assembly, the Under-Secretaries-General for Human Rights and for Public Information, the Executive Director of UNICEF, UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador Audrey Hepburn, the Chairman of the Working Group on the Rights of the Child, and the host of the children's television show Sesame Street.

35. The 15-minute 1989 Wrap-up television programme highlighted the year's major activities of the United Nations system, with the rights of the child as a common thread running through the programme. This was distributed world wide to national television stations in the six official languages and in Ukrainian.

36. The symposium on the World Public Information Campaign on Human Rights, co-sponsored by the Department of Public Information with the Centre for Human Rights and convened at Headquarters on 19 October 1989 by the New York NGO Committee on Human Rights, brought together over 250 representatives of international non-governmental organizations. The symposium, held under the theme "Everyone's Rights, Everyone's Responsibilities", was targeted especially to non-governmental organizations not directly involved in human rights advocacy and sought to demonstrate the link between human rights and a wide range of civil, political, economic, social and development issues. Participants discussed activities which they could undertake as part of the World Information Campaign and adopted a set of recommendations to non-governmental organizations and United Nations bodies concerned.

VI. ACTIVITIES AGAINST RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

37. In resolution 44/50, section II, paragraph 1, recommendation 2 (c), the Department was further requested to continue to disseminate information about United Nations activities for the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination.

38. In addition to providing regular press, radio and television coverage of the proceedings of all relevant United Nations bodies, the Department produced for United Nations Day 1989 a leaflet in English, French and Spanish covering the topic of racial discrimination. Aimed at secondary schools and universities, it contains a message from the Secretary-General to students and suggestions to teachers.

39. In the past year, some 325 public inquiries on the question of racial discrimination were handled by the Department at Headquarters alone.

VII. ACTIVITIES RELATING TO WOMEN AND THEIR ROLE IN SOCIETY

40. In resolution 44/50, section II, paragraph 1, recommendation 2 (c), the Department was further requested to continue to disseminate information about United Nations activities pertaining to the advancement of the status of women and their role in society.

41. The Department issued a press kit to mark on 18 December 1989 the tenth anniversary of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. The kit was particularly well received by participants in the ninth session of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, held at United Nations Headquarters from 22 January to 2 February 1990, and in an international symposium organized from 20 to 22 January 1990 in New York by International Women's Rights Action Watch. The kit, produced in English, French and Spanish, contains 17 fact sheets and other information material on the role of women in society and on the status of the Convention. It was distributed at Headquarters and world wide, through United Nations information centres and services.

42. The Department produced feature articles on the status of women in relation to a wide range of issues, such as: "Women in developing countries: invisible victims of the economic crisis"; "Women in politics: Still the exception?"; "UN acts for women's rights: ten-year-old women's rights convention serves as catalyst for action"; "Commission on the Status of Women"; "The feminization of poverty".

43. In observance of International Women's Day, a non-governmental organization briefing was organized on 8 March 1990 and a poster and feature article, entitled "Women and the environment: sustaining our common future", were produced for official launch on that day. The United Nations Environment Programme has contributed $5,000 to production of the poster, as part of activities leading to the Conference on Environment and Development scheduled to be held in 1992.

44. The draft of a booklet entitled The Tie that Binds: Women and the Global Economy was recently completed by the Department. The booklet will be co-produced with the Non-Governmental Liaison Service.

45. An inter-agency advisory group on information activities for women was established by the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information to promote communication and co-operation between the various United Nations bodies concerned with issues relating to the advancement of women. At its first series of meetings, held during the last quarter of 1989, the Advisory Group provided input to a new "Calendar of UN women's events" and decided, inter alia, to link the themes of women and the environment for the year 1990.

46. Another initiative was launched in February 1990, in the form of a "Media Breakfast" for selected editors-in-chief, feature editors and correspondents accredited to the United Nations. The breakfast provided a unique opportunity for this media group to exchange views with two of the highest-ranking women officials in the United Nations system, the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information, who hosted the event, and the head of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, who briefed the group on the role of the United Nations in current issues relating to women.

VIII. ACTIVITIES PERTAINING TO ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

47. In resolution 44/50, section II, paragraph 1, recommendation 2 (c), the Department was requested to continue to disseminate, in co-ordination with the information services of other relevant agencies, information about United Nations activities pertaining to the problems of economic and social development, as well as international economic co-operation aimed at resolving external debt problems. Recommendation 2 (i) specifically urged the Department to ensure the provision of coverage of the special session of the General Assembly devoted to international economic co-operation, in particular to the revitalization of economic growth and development of the developing countries, to be held from 23 to 27 April 1990.

48. In pursuance of these mandates, the Department has focused its activities on development issues in preparation for these major United Nations events in 1990: the special session of the General Assembly devoted to international economic co-operation, the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, and the adoption of the international development strategy for the fourth United Nations development decade.

49. A press conference was organized in January 1990 to publicize the release of the Secretary-General's report for the special session of the General Assembly and to brief correspondents on the state of the world economy at the end of 1989. Summary notes were distributed to the press and the United Nations information centres and services for world-wide dissemination.

50. A comprehensive information kit, directed primarily to the media, was prepared on issues relating to international economic co-operation to be addressed by the General Assembly at the special session. The kit, comprising background papers, features and graphics, was distributed world wide in English, French and Spanish. To further publicize the special session, the Department is organizing for the international media and non-governmental organizations special briefings prior to the session. The Department is also assisting non-governmental organizations in

the preparation of an international seminar on women and global economic issues to be held concurrently with the special session.

51. A brochure on the least developed countries was produced in English, French and Spanish for world-wide distribution, in preparation for the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, to be held in Paris from 3 to 14 September 1990. This material is part of the overall information strategy planned by the Department of Public Information in co-operation with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) for the Conference on the Least Developed Countries.

52. An information kit on poverty, targeted primarily to the media, was prepared in November 1989 and distributed world wide in English, French and Spanish. The kit contains a summary of the report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly on international co-operation for the eradication of poverty in developing countries (A/44/467), a feature story and graphics.

53. A comprehensive booklet on global economic issues, entitled The World Economy: A Global Challenge, was published in March 1990 and distributed to United Nations information centres and services for dissemination to educational institutions, non-governmental organizations and the general public. The booklet was issued in English, French and Spanish, in a question-and-answer format.

54. The Department is designing an information strategy to publicize the United Nations annual World Economic Survey. Contacts have been established with the World Bank for closer co-operation in this regard. The End of the Year Note, an extension of the Survey, was promoted by the Department and received international media attention.

55. The comprehensive press kit on the debt crisis, produced in October 1989 to publicize the report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly on the external debt crisis and development (A/44/628), was extremely well received, and a reprint proved insufficient to meet demand. To avoid the cost of a third print but still respond to the increasing number of requests, the Department published in English, French and Spanish a booklet entitled Debt: A Crisis for Development. Targeted to a wide variety of audiences, the booklet uses the contents of the kit and includes two additional articles - "Eradicating poverty" and "Women in developing countries: the invisible victims of the economic crisis".

56. On 11 December 1989, for the twentieth anniversary of the Declaration on Social Progress and Development, the General Assembly held a commemorative meeting at which the Department distributed language versions of the Declaration, accompanied by a special commemorative stamp cancellation and cover produced by the United Nations Postal Administration. A special "UN in Action" television magazine item featuring the objectives and principles of the Declaration was produced and distributed by the Department world wide, for broadcast on or around the anniversary day. The radio programme "Perspective" aired an interview with the Director in charge of social development on the occasion of the anniversary.

57. As part of its overall efforts to improve the co-ordination and effectiveness of information activities, the Department has assigned a project manager to develop and co-ordinate its programmes concerning disabled persons. The film Breaking Barriers was premiered at the United Nations Meeting on Human Resources and Disability held in August 1989 at Tallin, Soviet Union. Press coverage and media liaison were provided for the meeting. On Staff Day 1989, the Department arranged, in co-operation with the Office of Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Promotion of the Decade of Disabled Persons, for the showing of the film Rain Man to the staff, and highlighted United Nations programmes for disabled persons in an introduction to the film. Among activities to mark the end of the Decade, the Department is producing a new brochure entitled The United Nations and Disabled Persons, also with the assistance of the Office of the Special Representative.

58. A photographic exhibit, entitled "More alike than different: blind and visually impaired children around the world", was organized by the American Foundation for the Blind with the co-operation of the Department. New technological aids for the visually impaired were demonstrated at the exhibit in the public lobby of the General Assembly building, from 1 to 26 March 1990.

59. A symposium was organized on World AIDS Day 1989 in co-operation with WHO and the United Nations International School. Participants included the Director of the WHO Liaison Office with the United Nations, the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation, and representatives of UNFPA, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and numerous North American medical research centres, educational institutions and outreach programmes.

IX. ACTIVITIES PERTAINING TO THE ENVIRONMENT

60. The Department was also requested, in resolution 44/50, section II, paragraph 1, recommendation 2 (c), to continue to disseminate, in co-ordination with the information services of other relevant agencies, information about United Nations activities pertaining to the environment.

61. During 1989, the Department continued to disseminate, in both official and non-official languages, radio and television programmes on a wide range of environmental issues, including the following: global warming and climate change; depletion of the ozone layer; contamination of the oceans and seas; degradation of land resources caused by acid rain, drought, desertification and deforestation; environmental implications of development and technologies; sustainable and environmentally sound development; protection of the marine environment; control of trans-boundary movements of hazardous wastes and their disposal; protection of the environment in Antarctica; and preparations for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992.

62. In addition to short items in news and current affairs magazines, the Department produced in various languages 17 special feature radio programmes on problems relating to the environment. "Environment and Development", "Saving the Ozone Layer" and "Hazardous Wastes: The Problems and Solutions" were the titles of three editions of the in-depth weekly programme, "Perspective". These features

were adapted in Chinese, French, Indonesian, Hindi, Kiswahili, Russian and Turkish and distributed to some 350 radio stations world wide. The weekly programme in French, "Perspectives internationales", featured four editions entitled "Practical Approach to Conservation of the Environment", "The Problems of Toxic Wastes and Acid Rain", "Environment and Sustained Development" and "Environment: The Ozone Layer".

63. Other special programmes included: an edition of the weekly radio programme in Chinese on "Food and Environment"; four editions of the weekly programme in Russian featuring "The Health of the Planet Earth", "Environment Security: Our Common Responsibilities", and "Environment and Development" (in two parts); three editions of the weekly programme in Portuguese entitled "Environment and Development", "Suicide or Ecological Survival" and "Environment, Development and New Technologies". A special feature on "The Global Environment in Crisis", produced in two parts, was distributed to radio stations in the Caribbean region.

64. The UN in Action video programme produced two editions entitled "The United Nations Tackles Toxic Pesticides" and "The United Nations Helps Clean Up the Havana Harbour", and World Chronicle featured three editions focusing on deforestation in the third world, environmental protection, and environment and health.

65. Relevant information has continued to be disseminated through various Department publications such as UN Chronicle, Yearbook of the United Nations, Basic Facts about the United Nations, and Development Forum which regularly covers environmental issues in its "Ecowatch" column. The 1989 edition of Notes for Speakers also included a chapter on the environment.

66. In the past year, the Department replied to over 780 public inquiries concerning environmental issues. Fifty in-house briefings and five outside speaking engagements were arranged for audiences, totalling some 1,640 and 2,000 people, respectively.

67. In 1989, the annual conference for non-governmental organizations, which remains the corner-stone of the Department's information programme for non-governmental organizations, had as its theme "Environment and development: only one Earth". The three-day conference, held in September 1989 immediately prior to the opening of the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly, was attended by close to 1,000 participants representing 496 non-governmental organizations from 44 countries.

68. To publicize the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (1990-1999), the Department is developing a comprehensive information programme in co-operation with the United Nations Disaster Relief Organization and the secretariat of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction. Activities within the programme include: an international journalists' round table in Jamaica; co-production of a 30-minute television documentary on planning and preparedness for a variety of potential disasters, for world-wide distribution in Arabic, English, French and Spanish; publication in English, French and Spanish, of an illustrated brochure on the aims and purposes of the Decade, for distribution to the media, non-governmental organizations, governmental agencies and educational

institutions; publication, in English, French and Spanish, of a student leaflet to be released on United Nations Day 1991, for secondary schools, universities, youth organizations and other interested non-governmental organizations.

X. CAMPAIGN AGAINST ILLICIT TRAFFICKING OF NARCOTICS AND DRUG ABUSE

69. The Department was also urged, in resolution 44/50, section II, paragraph 1, recommendation 2 (c), to continue to disseminate information about United Nations activities pertaining to the international campaign against drug abuse and illicit trafficking, including adequate coverage of the special session of the General Assembly to consider the question of international co-operation against illicit production, supply, demand, trafficking and distribution of narcotic drugs.

70. In line with this request, the Department focused in late 1989 and early 1990 on activities pertaining to the special session of the General Assembly, held at Headquarters from 20 to 23 February 1990. In addition to providing full press, radio and television coverage of the session, the Department produced and distributed in English, French and Spanish a media kit on the key issues before the Assembly and held a journalists' briefing prior to the session, as well as press conferences during the session. Public service announcements calling attention to the session were placed in international magazines. Television and radio interviews were arranged with senior United Nations officials, and special articles were featured in various Department publications such as Development Forum and UN Chronicle.

71. The booklet entitled The United Nations and Drug Abuse Control was revised and updated in English, French and Spanish. A chapter on drug abuse and illicit trafficking was included in the 1989 edition of Notes for Speakers.

72. For International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking (1990), a major photographic exhibit, entitled "Picture a drug-free world", is planned in co-operation with the International Photographic Council, as part of a special programme for the Day which includes production of promotional materials such as lapel buttons, fliers and posters.

XI. ACTIVITIES IN CONNECTION WITH AFRICAN RECOVERY AND DEVELOPMENT

73. In resolution 44/50, section II, paragraph 1, recommendation 2 (d), the Department was urged to do its utmost to disseminate widely and to publicize the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990 and the tremendous efforts of the African countries towards recovery and development, as well as the positive response by the international community to alleviate the serious economic situation prevailing in Africa.

74. The Africa Recovery Unit of the Department has continued to produce the widely read publication, Africa Recovery, and to provide essential information on issues related to the United Nations Programme of Action. Recent issues of Africa Recovery carried detailed reports on both the African Alternative Framework to

Structural Adjustment Programmes for Socio-Economic Recovery and Transformation and the long-term perspective study recently issued by the World Bank, Sub-Saharan Africa: From Crisis to Sustainable Growth, as well as articles on developments relating to debt, aid flows, commodities and other major economic issues.

75. The Department has organized media coverage, including attendance by international journalists at two major conferences organized by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) - the Conference on Integration of Women in Development held in November 1989 at Abuja, Nigeria, and the Conference on Popular Participation in Africa's Economic Recovery and Development, held in February 1990 at Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania. A staff member of the Department attended both meetings to act as spokesman for the Special Representative of the Secretary-General.

76. The Department also prepared and oversaw publication in October 1989 of a report written on behalf of ECA and the Inter-Agency Task Force of the United Nations Programme of Action, entitled South African Destabilization: The Economic Cost of Frontline Resistance to Apartheid. The report was launched jointly by President Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia and the Executive Secretary of ECA. On that occasion, the Department issued a press summary to help give the report wide coverage in the international media.

77. As part of the "About the United Nations" series, a 15-minute educational video and accompanying teaching guide were produced on African recovery, with cover stories from student reporters on the economic situation in Africa. The educational kit, aimed at secondary school students, is available in English, French and Spanish.

XII. ACTIVITIES PERTAINING TO THE INDEPENDENCE PROCESS OF NAMIBIA

78. In resolution 44/50, section II, paragraph 1, recommendation 2 (h), the Department was urged to continue to disseminate information about Namibia, in particular the current independence process as provided for in Security Council resolution 435 (1978) of 29 September 1978.

79. In late 1989 and early 1990, the main characteristic of events related to Namibia has been the acceleration of the process leading to the attainment of independence and nationhood. This has resulted in a shift in emphasis in activities of the Department pertaining to Namibia. The focus of information is gradually shifting to the economic and social development of the new Namibia.

80. Following the release of "UNTAG and Namibia: Press Kit II" in October 1989, the Department arranged for the distribution of a special information package to the directors of television services in 18 African countries. The package included the press kit, a UN in Action video cassette on the subject of voter registration in Namibia, and a reference list of other DPI videos and films on Namibia.

81. In mid-December, the Department issued an information leaflet entitled "UNTAG and Namibia: Post Election Update", which chronicled the results of the

November 1989 elections in Namibia along with certain relevant statements and documents. Distribution was made world wide through United Nations centres and services, with special attention to centres in Africa and in countries which contributed troops to the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG).

82. The press kits and other information papers on UNTAG which provided in-depth information on the process leading to the independence of Namibia under United Nations auspices have helped to gather considerable coverage by the media on an issue of highest priority to the international community.

83. As part of the information programme undertaken under the guidance of the United Nations Council for Namibia, the Department produced two television spots in English, French, Spanish and Afrikaans on the independence process of Namibia. This programme also includes the following information products and activities: two posters hailing the independence of Namibia; a booklet on the economic and social outlook of Namibia; a journalists' mission to Namibia with the participation of 15 senior economic journalists from major news media, particularly from potential donor countries; a film to present the face of the new nation to the widest world audience; and a photo exhibit presenting the culture, people and land of Namibia.

XIII. APPLICATION OF MODERN TECHNOLOGIES

84. In resolution 44/50, section II, paragraph 1, recommendation 3 (b), the Department was requested, in the context of the review of its role, performance and method of work, to continue to apply appropriate modern technologies for the collection, production, storage, dissemination and distribution of information materials.

85. In the year since the Department of Public Information last reported to the Committee on Information on application of modern technologies within the Department (A/AC.198/1989/4), work has continued to develop the computer applications and related activities outlined in that report.

86. It has been possible to reach the goal, cited in paragraph 9 of the 1989 report, of providing an average of one microcomputer or workstation for every two established posts in the Department at Headquarters, as well as one or two microcomputers for each of 42 United Nations information centres. In January 1990 45 microcomputers for the centres were delivered to Headquarters and are being prepared for shipment to the field. For Headquarters offices, 65 microcomputers were delivered in March 1990. As a result, staff in all units of the Department have ready access to computers for production of information materials, record keeping, electronic mail and other purposes. In addition, a super-minicomputer has been delivered as a replacement for two older models; its installation will enable the Department to run large-scale information systems to facilitate information dissemination and speed production.

87. Also delivered in March 1990 was an advanced computerized typesetting system integrating text and graphics, which is to be linked with microcomputer-based desktop publishing systems to produce high-quality output for publications at a

fraction of the cost of external publishing services. Since December 1989, press releases have been reproduced on high-volume duplicators, replacing the mimeograph technology utilized since the 1940s.

88. A total of 45 information centres and services now have facsimile telegraph receiver/transmitters, compared to 10 a year ago. This has greatly enhanced the exchange of information between Headquarters and the field, and has enabled the centres to distribute news items rapidly within the areas they serve.

89. Arrangements are being made to expand co-operation with Global Education Motivators, a non-governmental organization, for the dissemination of United Nations information materials through public data communication networks, utilizing an information system called United Nations Information Services (UNISER). Since March 1990, press releases are being sent to UNISER at the same time they are released to journalists at Headquarters rather than at the end of each day, and plans are being drawn up to provide additional information on line. As noted in paragraph 15 of the 1989 report, the United Nations incurs no costs for administration of this service or for computer storage.

90. An information system to track arrangements for guided tours and group visits at Headquarters became operational in 1989. Programming is well advanced for other systems that will consolidate the contact and mailing lists of the Department and control inventory and distribution of information materials. Both systems are due to become operational in 1990.

XIV. STRENGTHENING OF THE UNITED NATIONS INFORMATION CENTRES AND SERVICES

91. In recommendation 6 of resolution 44/50, section II, paragraph 1, the General Assembly requested United Nations information centres to intensify direct and systematic communication exchange with local media, information and educational institutions and non-governmental organizations. Every effort should be made to establish close co-ordination with other field offices of the United Nations system, particularly those of UNDP, in order to avoid duplication of work, taking into account the functional autonomy that the United Nations information centres should have.

92. Through evolving relations with local press, radio and television agencies, the number of United Nations information centres with established time-slots for United Nations audio-visual programmes has grown. Centres co-operate with local broadcasting stations by providing them with substantive inputs and/or programmes produced at Headquarters, while the stations remain responsible for actually producing the programmes, or by having the Centre Director or a visiting United Nations official interviewed. In addition to the information centres at Bogotá, Manila and Ouagadougou, centres at Antananarivo, Brazzaville, Buenos Aries, Dakar and Lima now have regularly scheduled programmes on United Nations issues. The United Nations Information Service at Geneva continues to produce radio and television programmes for world-wide distribution; the centre at Panama City produces a weekly 30-minute television programme of United Nations films; the

centre at Rio de Janeiro has a weekly prime-time half-hour on TV Educativa; and the centre at Sydney reports a new weekly half-hour radio programme.

93. The centre at Madrid has signed an agreement with the Catalonian regional television, TV-3, to adapt the entire collection of UN in Action videos into Catalan for broadcast in a regular programme co-ordinated by Centro UNESCO Catalonia; the centre is also co-operating with Estela Films to prepare a television series, The World Needs You. The centre at Prague and Czechoslovak television are preparing a series on the United Nations and environmental concerns. The centre at Yaoundé has opened discussions for a monthly 30-minute television programme on United Nations activities.

94. Newsletters are produced by many United Nations information centres and services as they reach out to their growing constituencies. Regular newsletters are published by the centres at Athens in Greek, Brazzaville in French, Buenos Aires in Spanish, Colombo in Sinhalese, Copenhagen in the five Nordic languages, Dhaka, Islamabad, Jakarta, Lagos, Manama and New Delhi in English, Ouagadougou in French, Prague in Czech, Santiago in Spanish and as of this year in Portuguese, Tokyo in Japanese, Washington in English, and Yangon in Burmese and English. The centre at Dar es Salaam is responsible for editing a quarterly newsletter, DEVNEWS, on United Nations development activities in the United Republic of Tanzania; the editorial board for the publication consists of representatives of UNDP, the United Nations Department of Technical Co-operation for Development, UNICEF, ILO and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

95. As part of their work programme, information centres and services continue to provide services to many agencies and programmes of the United Nations family, by organizing seminars, setting up exhibits, calling press conferences, giving press and non-governmental organization briefings. In the reporting period, such activities were rendered to FAO, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the International Maritime Organization, the International Telecommunication Union, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, UNDP, the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator, UNFPA, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, UNICEF, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, the Universal Postal Union, the United Nations University, the World Food Council, the World Federation of United Nations Associations, WHO and the World Bank.

96. Co-operation with UNDP in the field was strengthened with the participation of UNDP senior officials in the Latin American regional meeting of directors of information centres, held in Mexico City in February 1989, at which time the initial text of a "DPI/UNDP Understanding for Rationalizing United Nations Field Representation" was discussed and ideas were exchanged on furthering co-operation in the field. The text is being finalized by both the Department and UNDP, taking into consideration comments submitted by information centres directors and resident representatives following a trial year. Underscoring co-operation in the field, the Director of the United Nations Information Centre at Mexico City was invited to participate in the 1989 Latin American regional meeting of UNDP resident representatives.

97. The Department organized several meetings and training seminars to further improve co-ordination of programme and administrative activities between Headquarters and the field, and to enhance staff capabilities. A training programme for recently recruited UNIC information assistants was held at Headquarters from 5-9 June 1989, bringing together staff from the information centres at Beirut, Bucharest, Islamabad, Lagos, London, Madrid, Mexico City, Monrovia, Moscow, Panama City, Santiago, Washington, D.C., and Yaoundé.

98. The first regional training seminar for reference assistants took place in Nairobi, from 13 to 15 December 1989. It brought together reference assistants from the information centres at Accra, Algiers, Antananarivo, Brazzaville, Bujumbura, Cairo, Dakar, Dar es Salaam, Harare, Khartoum, Kinshasa, Lagos, Lomé, Lusaka, Maseru, Monrovia, Nairobi, Ouagadougou, Rabat, Tunis, Tripoli and Yaoundé. The fact that half the participants came from English-speaking and the other half from French-speaking African countries further enriched the lively exchange regarding regional needs and interest in United Nations documentation. Similar meetings are planned for the 1990-1991 biennium, the first of which is intended for information centres directors in Arabic-speaking countries, in March 1990 at Tunis.

99. In the past year all the posts of regional desk officers in the Centres Operations Service, Information Centres Division of the Department, have been filled, strengthening the daily link between the information centres in the field and the Department at Headquarters. All requests are channelled directly to the regional desk officers, who follow up with the pertinent sections and units of the Department. It is important to note that communication on administrative and operational matters is carried out in the two working languages of the Secretariat, as the case may be, which makes interaction between centres and the Department more direct and efficient.

XV. CO-ORDINATION OF INFORMATION ACTIVITIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

100. In recommendation 7 of resolution 44/50, section II, paragraph 1, the Department was encouraged to continue its active participation in the work of the Joint United Nations Information Committee (JUNIC), in recognition of the need for co-ordinating information activities of the United Nations system.

101. At its second regular session of 1989 held at Headquarters on 19 and 20 October 1989, the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination adopted decision 1989/30, entitled "Enhancing the public image of the United Nations system". The decision was adopted on the basis of recommendations contained in a paper on that subject (ACC/1989/CRP.10), prepared after extensive consultations between the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information and information directors of several United Nations specialized agencies and programmes.

102. ACC decision 1989/30 contains a number of concrete steps to be taken in order to promote awareness and understanding of the United Nations family of organizations, and a revision of the terms of reference of JUNIC, aimed at making it a more effective body and at providing a more practical framework for joint

action. One of the recommendations in the decision calls for the identification of the human, financial, technological and material means of collective action in order to pool and make maximum use of scarce resources within the system available for information activity. Priority consideration is to be given in this context to the possibility of developing, inter alia: a modern system-wide audio-visual capacity both in production and distribution; electronic distribution technology; and a methodology for films co-production.

103. Another priority task, in order to promote global awareness and understanding of the United Nations family of organizations, will be the preparation of a "United Nations system identity package", identifying each member of the system both as an autonomous or semi-autonomous entity with distinct mandates and responsibilities, and as an integral part of the system.

104. Under its revised mandate, JUNIC is responsible, inter alia, for enhancing modern information knowledge and skills development, practical experience sharing, and undertaking activities on themes of inter-agency and/or system-wide interest. The Committee is also responsible for fostering efficient information services, including shared use of facilities and resources, throughout the system. The Chairman of the Committee will be appointed biennially by ACC upon the recommendation of JUNIC.

105. In pursuance of its new mandate, JUNIC will convene its sixteenth session on 21 and 22 June 1990 at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, to consider a number of issues contained in ACC decision 1989/30.

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SUBSTANTIVE QUESTIONS

Public information activities of the United Nations pertaining to the policies and practices of apartheid

Report of the Secretary-General

INTRODUCTION

1. In resolution 44/50 of 8 December 1989, section II, paragraph 1, recommendation 2 (e), the General Assembly recommended that the Secretary-General should ensure that the Department of Public Information strengthen its activities and the dissemination of information on United Nations activities against the policies and practices of apartheid, giving due attention to the unilateral measures and official censorship imposed on the local and international media with regard to all aspects of that issue, provide adequate coverage of the sixteenth special session of the General Assembly on apartheid and its destructive consequences in southern Africa, held from 12 to 14 December 1989, and report thereon to the Committee on Information at its twelfth session, in 1990.

2. In response to resolution 43/60 A of 6 December 1988, the Secretary-General submitted to the General Assembly for consideration at its forty-fourth session, under agenda item 79, a report on questions relating to information (A/44/653) which covered, inter alia, information on United Nations activities against the policies and practices of apartheid, undertaken by the Department since the submission of its report to the Committee on Information at its eleventh substantive session, held from 13 to 28 April 1989. In several oral statements to the Special Political Committee when it considered item 79, the Under-Secretary-General for

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* A/AC.198/1990/1.

Public Information provided additional information on relevant activities of the Department.

3. The present paper brings up to date the information provided on the question in the report to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session.

4. In line with the request of the General Assembly, the special session of the General Assembly on apartheid and its destructive consequences in southern Africa, held at Headquarters from 12 to 14 December 1989, provided the focus for the activities of the Department of Public Information before, during and after the session. A multi-media information campaign was developed by the Department to bring the broadest public attention to this major event in the international struggle against apartheid.

Information activities prior to the sixteenth special session of the General Assembly on apartheid and its destructive consequences in southern Africa

5. Before the special session publicity was generated primarily through a five-part press kit produced in English and French. The kit contained the following documentation: a background paper; General Assembly resolution 43/50 G of 5 December 1988 and decision 43/462 of 11 July 1989 calling for the session; a selection of the Secretary-General's statements and those made on his behalf since the declaration on the state of emergency in South Africa on 20 July 1985; the Declaration on the Question of South Africa made by the Ad Hoc Committee on Southern Africa of the Organization of African Unity, at Harare, on 21 August 1989; and a booklet entitled South African Destabilization - The Economic Cost of Frontline Resistance to Apartheid. The press kit was distributed to all United Nations information centres and services for world-wide dissemination prior to the session. The kit was also distributed widely at Headquarters and through the Office of the President of the General Assembly.

6. Eleven senior journalists of world renown delegated, at the invitation of the Department, by Le Monde (France), the News Agency of Nigeria, Asahi Shimbun (Japan), Al Akhram (Egypt), Ziana (Zimbabwe), the BBC African Service, the Washington Post (United States), the Times of India, El Clarin (Argentina), Süddeutsche Zeitung (Federal Republic of Germany) and Jeune Afrique, participated in a day-long round-table discussion at Headquarters, on the eve of the special session. The round table included special briefings, followed by question-and-answer sessions, given by four eminent experts: the President of the General Assembly, Major-General Joseph N. Garba; the Assistant-Secretary-General of the Centre against Apartheid, Mr. Sotirios Mousouris; the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity, Mr. Salim A. Salim; and the General Secretary of the Congress of South African Trade Unions, Mr. Jay Naidoo. All 11 journalists sent advance news items to their respective agencies and covered the proceedings of the special session and its Ad Hoc Committee for their home media.

Information activities during the special session

7. The Department provided in the two working languages full press coverage of all the proceedings of the special session.

8. Radio news coverage was also provided on a daily basis. Eight editions of the twice-weekly programme, "South Africa Review" were devoted exclusively to the session. Four editions of a special radio documentary programme in the series entitled "One South Africa" also featured the session. A special edition of the in-depth weekly programme, "Perspective", was distributed to some 350 radio stations world wide. A weekly in-depth radio programme, entitled "A New Agenda - Peaceful Change in South Africa", was also produced, along with a 30-minute edition of "UN Africa". Radio programmes covering the special session were also produced in Arabic and Kiswahili. "Perspectives internationales" and "L'Afrique à l'ONU" also featured the special session.

9. The special session was covered on a daily basis by the television programmes of the Department. Television items on the session were sold to global syndicators VISNEWS and Worldwide TV News which in turn serviced television stations world wide. The television programme, UN in Action, produced a round-up edition which included an interview with the President of the General Assembly and was broadcast on the CNN network.

10. Every scheduled speaker at the special session and Ad Hoc Committee was given photographic coverage. Thirty-one rolls of film were shot, from which 25 photos were selected for dissemination to United Nations information centres and services. A reception hosted by the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information on the occasion of the special session was also given coverage. Requests for photographs from both media and delegations were handled by the Department on a daily basis.

Information activities following the special session

11. A press conference, conducted by the President of the General Assembly and chaired by the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information helped to provide publicity on the outcome of the special session. A statement from the Special Committee against Apartheid was issued as a press release.

12. The December 1989 edition of Objective: Justice, a biannual subscription and sales publication in English, was devoted to the special session.

13. The Department has developed for 1990 a comprehensive information programme linking all promotional activities on apartheid-related issues. The major objective of the programme is to focus public attention on the Declaration adopted at the special session of the General Assembly on Apartheid and its destructive consequences in southern Africa.

14. A photo exhibit on apartheid South Africa has been brought up to date, to become an integral part of this multi-media information programme. The exhibit will be shown by major United Nations information centres and services around the world. Cities where the exhibit will be shown include Buenos Aires, Copenhagen, Frankfurt, Geneva, Madrid, Paris, Rome, Santiago, Stockholm and Washington, D.C. United Nations information centres and services receiving the exhibit are planning media events to publicize the various elements of the Declaration on South Africa. Events include journalists' round tables and national seminars featuring eminent

personalities in the political, academic, cultural, artistic and information and communication fields, with the participation, whenever possible, of a senior United Nations official.

Activities pertaining to other major events

15. In early 1990, activities of the Department focused on one major historical event: the release, on 11 February 1990, of South African leader Nelson Mandela, after over 27 years of imprisonment.

16. The statement and telegram of the Secretary-General welcoming the release of Mr. Mandela were issued as press releases in the two working languages. The special meeting held by the Special Committee against Apartheid to celebrate the event was fully covered by the Department in print and on radio and television. A videotape of the meeting was offered to Mr. Mandela through the Special Committee against Apartheid.

17. The Department also provided full coverage of the solemn meeting held by the Special Committee on 11 October 1989 at Headquarters, in commemoration of the International Day of Solidarity with South African Political Prisoners.

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SUBSTANTIVE QUESTIONS

Public information activities of the United Nations pertaining to the situation in the Middle East and the question of Palestine

Report of the Secretary-General

INTRODUCTION

1. In resolution 44/50 of 8 December 1989, section II, paragraph 1, recommendation 2 (g), the General Assembly recommended that the Secretary-General should ensure that the Department of Public Information continue to cover all United Nations activities pertaining to the situation in the Middle East and the question of Palestine in particular, and current developments therein, in accordance with relevant United Nations resolutions, and report thereon to the Committee on Information at its twelfth session, in 1990.

2. In response to resolution 43/60 A of 6 December 1988, the Secretary-General submitted to the General Assembly for consideration at its forty-fourth session a report on questions relating to information (A/44/653) which covered, inter alia, information on United Nations activities pertaining to the situation in the Middle East and the question of Palestine, undertaken by the Department since submission of its report to the Committee on Information at its eleventh substantive session, held from 13 to 28 April 1989.

3. Since submission of the report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session, the Department has undertaken the following activities pertaining to the situation in the Middle East and the question of

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* A/AC.198/1990/1.

Palestine, in compliance with resolution 44/50, section II. Activities undertaken are also in compliance with General Assembly resolution 44/41 C of 6 December 1989, in which the Department of Public Information was requested to continue, in full co-operation with the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, its special information programme on the question of Palestine for the biennium 1990-1991, with special emphasis on public opinion in Europe and North America.

Publications and other printed materials

4. The Department continued to provide press coverage of all meetings of relevant United Nations bodies, including deliberations of the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session, the Security Council and the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. Press releases were also issued on regional seminars and symposia held on the question.

5. The UN Chronicle continued to report extensively on the consideration given to the question of Palestine and related items. All relevant issues were also covered in general reference works of the Department such as the Yearbook of the United Nations, Everyone's United Nations, and Basic Facts about the United Nations, a new edition of which was issued in February 1990 in English, with French and Spanish to follow.

6. The general information booklet The United Nations and the Question of Palestine was reprinted in Arabic, English, French and Spanish. A revision and update of this booklet have been completed and preparations made for its publication. An illustrated booklet, Human Rights for the Palestinians, on the work of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories, was also produced in Arabic, English, French and Spanish. A poster entitled The Palestinian People Do Have Rights! was reprinted and distributed.

7. On 29 November 1989, to mark the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, the Department produced and distributed a special information kit to the press and to officials attending the ceremony organized at Headquarters by the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. The Department also assisted in setting up a special exhibit in the public lobby of the General Assembly building. Updated information materials, including brochures, booklets and posters, were distributed to United Nations information centres and services for world-wide dissemination, to assist in observances of the International Day.

Audio-visual materials

8. As part of its "About the United Nations" series, the Department produced for world-wide distribution an educational video and accompanying teaching guide on the question of Palestine. This educational video kit, produced in English, French and Spanish, is targeted to secondary-level students.

9. All aspects of the question of Palestine and related issues were covered extensively in the news and taped feature radio programmes produced by the Department. In addition to short items in news and current affairs radio magazines, the Department continued to produce feature programmes, in both official and non-official languages, exclusively devoted to the situation in the Middle East and the question of Palestine.

10. Two editions, respectively entitled "The question of Palestine: the uprising (intifadah) of the Palestinian people" and "The question of Palestine: the continuing search for a peace settlement", were produced as part of the in-depth weekly programme, "Perspective", which is distributed to some 350 radio stations world wide. These features were adapted into Chinese, French and Turkish for the weekly programmes in these languages.

11. "Al-Majallatu Al-Natika" (formerly, "Afakon Alamiaya"), the weekly programme in Arabic, produced three special editions, which included excerpts of statements from the Presidents of the General Assembly and the Security Council and a message from Yasser Arafat on the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, and an interview with the Permanent Observer for the Arab League on the situation in the Middle East and the question of Palestine. The International Day was also featured in other programmes such as "Bonjour l'Afrique" and the weekly programme in Kiswahili. "L'Afrique à l'ONU" produced two editions on the situation in the occupied Arab territories and on the work of the Committee on the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.

12. Editions of "UN Calling Asia" and the weekly programme in Urdu featured background on the question of Palestine, and the United Nations Regional Seminar on the Question of Palestine held at Kuala Lumpur.

Journalists encounters

13. A North American and Latin American and Caribbean regional encounter on the question of Palestine was organized at Buenos Aires from 12 to 14 February 1990. The encounter brought together about 30 journalists representing the print, radio and television media, and a panel of experts for in-depth, informal and candid discussions on various aspects of the question of Palestine.

14. Another regional encounter, to be organized in Singapore from 26 to 28 March 1990 for the Asia and Pacific region, will be attended by about 25 journalists from many countries in the region, representing the print, radio and television media in Asia and the Pacific.

15. The Department also organized three series of national encounters in Latin America and the Caribbean region, in Europe and in the Asia and the Pacific region. These encounters were in the form of in-depth press conferences addressed by small balanced panels of experts. The first set of national encounters was held between 2 and 20 February 1990 in Mexico City, Santiago and Port-of-Spain. In Europe, the national encounters are to be held between 9 and 16 March 1990 in Oslo, London and Belgrade; and the third set of national encounters, between 19 and 30 March 1990 in Tokyo, Bangkok and New Delhi.

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DRAFT MEDIUM-TERM PLAN FOR THE PERIOD 1992-1997

MAJOR PROGRAMME VIII. PUBLIC INFORMATION

Programme 38. Public Information

Note by the Secretariat

1. In accordance with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 43/219 of 21 December 1988 on programme planning, and the relevant provisions of the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation (ST/SGB/PPBME/Rules 1), the proposed text of the programme on public information of the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997 (see document A/45/6, prog. 38) is submitted to the Committee on Information for its review and comments.

2. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 41/213 of 19 December 1986 and other pertinent decisions, the Secretary-General submitted revisions to the medium-term plan (A/43/6) 1/ for the period 1984-1989 (extended to 1991), including revisions to chapter 9 of that plan, Public information. In addition to the extension of the period covered by the plan, the revisions reflected, inter alia, a new programme structure for the Department of Public Information. The proposed revisions, including modifications recommended by the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination, were approved by the General Assembly at its forty-third session.

3. The draft text of programme 38, Public information, of the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997, has been prepared following closely the substance of the plan as thus approved by the General Assembly for the current period, with

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* A/AC.198/1990/1.

appropriate adjustments necessitated by the new period covered as well as certain other developments, such as the independence of Namibia. Furthermore, it is the Secretary-General's intention to regroup under one programme of the plan various sub-programmes related to revenue-producing activities, among which is part of the sub-programme on public services of the current public information programme. Accordingly, the proposed text of the public information programme of the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997 does not include a separate sub-programme on public services.

Notes

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-third Session, Supplement No. 6.